

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 The invention concerns a method for forming metallization and contact structures in an integrated circuit. The method involves the steps of etching a trench in the trench dielectric layer a trench dielectric layer of a composite structure containing a semiconductor substrate comprising an active region, a gate structure thereover, and dielectric spacers adjacent to the gate structure, a contact dielectric layer; and the trench dielectric layer; etching the contact dielectric layer under conditions which do not damage the gate structure to form a first contact opening that exposes a region of the semiconductor substrate; and depositing a conductive material into the contact opening and the trench.